

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 01257 031649Z

71

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AS-01

/058 W

----- 028983

R 031455Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1817

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CARACAS 1257

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, VE

SUBJECT: AGUILAR AND HERRERA TRIUMPH AT COPEI NATIONAL CONVENTION

SUMMARY. THE COPEI NATIONAL CONVENTION REELECTED PEDRO PABLO AGUILAR AS SECRETARY GENERAL OVER CHALLENGER JOSE CUIEL, THEREBY CONSOLIDATING THE POSITION OF SENATOR LUIS HERRERA CAMPINS AS THE PARTY'S 1978 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. CUIEL ACCEPTED HIS DEFEAT GRACEFULLY. AS HAD BEEN EARLIER AGREED, EX-PRESIDENT CALDERA AND HIS FOLLOWERS DID NOT CONTEST THE DOMINANT POSITION OF THE AGUILAR/HERRERA FORCES, THUS AVOIDING A PARTY SPLIT. AGUILAR PLEDGED MORE VIGOROUS OPPOSITION WITHIN THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. END SUMMARY.

1. SENATOR PEDRO PABLO AGUILAR WAS REELECTED COPEI SECRETARY GENERAL IN A LANDSLIDE VICTORY OVER EX-PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER JOSE CUIEL AT THE COPEI PARTY'S NATIONAL CONVENTION IN CARACAS JANUARY 30-31. AGUILAR'S FORCES COMBINED WITH THOSE OF SENATOR LUIS HERRERA CAMPINS, FRONTRUNNER FOR THE 1978 COPEI PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION, TO OVERWHELM CUIEL, THE CANDIDATE OF THE PARTY'S "ORTHODOX" FACTION, BY A VOTE OF 810 TO 332. FOLLOWING AN ADDRESS BY CALDERA CALLING FOR PARTY UNITY, THE ACTUAL BALLOTING WAS SOMEWHAT OF AN ANTICLIMAX. CUIEL, GIVEN A SEAT ON THE NATIONAL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 01257 031649Z

COMMITTEE, ACCEPTED DEFEAT GRACEFULLY AND PLEDGED HIS SUPPORT

FOR THE PARTY'S 1978 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. AT THE CONVENTION'S CLOSE AGUILAR STATED THAT COPEI WOULD INCREASE ITS OPPOSITION TO THE AD GOVERNMENT WHILE CONTINUING TO WORK WITH AD FOR THE GOOD OF VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY.

2. ALTHOUGH ELECTED UNDER A WINNER-TAKE-ALL SYSTEM, THE NEW COPEI NATIONAL COMMITTEE WILL BE ALMOST EVENLY DIVIDED BETWEEN AGUILAR/HERRERA SUPPORTERS (DESIGNATED # BELOW) AND ORTHODOX OR CALDERA SUPPORTERS (UNDESIGNATED) SINCE THE AGUILAR/HERRERA SLATE WAS DRAWN UP WITH PARTY UNITY IN MIND.. THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE WILL BE COMPOSED AS FOLLOWS:

PRESIDENT PEDRO DEL CORRAL
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT GODOFREDO GONZALEZ (#)
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT JOSE ANTONIO PEREZ DIAZ (#)
THIRD VICE PRESIDENT ARISTIDES CALVANI
FOURTH VICE PRESIDENT RAFAEL LEON LEON (#)
SECRETARY GENERAL PEDRO PABLO AGUILAR (#)
COMMITTEE MEMBERS LUIS HERRERA CAMPINS (#)
 EDUARDO FERNANDEZ
 OSWALDO ALVAREZ PAZ
 ABDON VIVAS TERAN (#)
 JOSE RODRIGUEZ SAEZ (#)
 JUAN JOSE RACHADELL (#)
 HILARION CARDOZO
 LUIS ENRIQUE OBERTO (#)
 RAFAEL MONTES DE OCA (#)
 JULIO CESAR MORENO (#)
PERMANENT MEMBERS RAFAEL CALDERA
 LORENZO FERNANDEZ
 EDECIO LA RIVA ARAUJO
 ARISTIDES BEAUJON (X)

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE WILL THUS CONTAIN 11 AGUILAR/HERRERA SUPPORTERS AND 9 CALDERA SUPPORTERS (BEAUJON - DESIGNATED X - BEING OUTSIDE BOTH CAMPS). THE NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE CALVANI, LEON, CARDOZO, OBERTO, RACHADELL, MONTES DE OCA, AND MORENO. THEY REPLACE DELFIN SANCHEZ, CEFERINO MEDINA CASTILLO, RAFAEL SALVATIERRA, ANTONIO TORO, JOSE RAFAEL PEREZ FEBRES, RAFAEL CLARENCIO GONZALEZ, AND JOSE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 01257 031649Z

RODRIGUEZ ITURBE, ALL CALDERA SUPPORTERS. THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE WILL SHORTLY CHOOSE THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE PARTY'S NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, INCLUDING 11 COUNSELORS, 11 NATIONAL SECRETARIES, AND 2 DEPUTY SECRETARIES GENERAL.

3. COMMENT. THE BIG WINNER IN THE COPEI BALLOTING IS SENATOR HERRERA CAMPINS WHO NOW SEEMS VIRTUALLY ASSURED OF COPEI'S 1978 PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION. AGUILAR ADMITTED

AS MUCH WHEN HE SAID THERE ARE THOSE WHO THINK THAT THE CONVENTION'S RESULTS "CONSTITUTE A RATHER CLEAR DEFINITION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY." AGUILAR, ORIGINALLY A FOLLOWER OF CALDERA, REALIZED HE WAS TO BE DUMPED AS SECRETARY GENERAL AND SKILLFULLY MADE COMMON CAUSE WITH HERRERA, WHO NEEDED A FRONT MAN TO HELP HIM GAIN CONTROL OF THE COPEI PARTY ORGANIZATION. THEIR COMBINED FORCES TRIUMPHED OVER THE PARTY'S ORTHODOX WING IN NEARLY ALL OF THE STATE PRIMARIES AND IN THE PARTY'S SIX FUNCTIONAL GROUPINGS. REALIZING HIS SUPPORTERS WOULD LOSE OUT IN THE NATIONAL CONVENTION, CALDERA REPORTEDLY MADE PEACE WITH HERRERA IN EARLY JANUARY, AND THE WINNING SLATE REFLECTS THEIR DIVISION OF THE SPOILS. THIS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE REJECTION OF CALDERA'S LEADERSHIP WITHIN COPEI BUT WILL INEVITABLY RESULT IN DIMINISHING HIS INFLUENCE. A NUMBER OF CALDERA'S SUPPORTERS ON THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE HAVE ALREADY INDICATED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT HERRERA AS THE 1978 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. THE COPEYANOS APPEAR TO HAVE SETTLED THEIR INTERNAL DIFFERENCES WITH A MINIMUM OF RANCOR AND UNITED THEIR PARTY BEHIND HERRERA, GENERALLY ACKNOWLEDGED TO BE COPEI'S STRONGEST POTENTIAL PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. SHLAUDEMAM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CARACA01257
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760041-0126
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760289/aaaadabt.tel
Line Count: 137
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 JUL 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <26 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AGUILAR AND HERRERA TRIUMPH AT COPEI NATIONAL CONVENTION SUMMARY. THE COPEI NATIONAL CONVENTION REELECTED PEDRO PABLO
TAGS: PINT, VE, COPEI, (AGUILAR, PEDRO PABLO), (HERRERA CAMPINS, LUIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006